

# QUINTESSENTIAL BX VITAL RULES REFERENCE

David Perry's curation and expurgation of  
Gavin Norman's *B/X Essentials* revision of  
**Tom Moldvay** and **Dave Cook's**  
*Basic & Expert* edition of **Gary Gygax's**  
*Original Fantasy Adventure Game*  
with refinements from Gavin Norman and  
*Lamentations of the Flame Princess*

V1.0

# INTRODUCTION

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Quintessential BX is a trimming and tweaking of Gavin Norman's B/X Essentials, itself a revision of Tom Moldvay and David Cook's *Basic/Expert* edition of the Original Fantasy Adventure Game. It includes a few refinements, additions, and options from myself, Gavin, and *Lamentations of the Flame Princess*, such as ascending AC, a reasonable Encumbrance system, and various new options in combat. QBX is intended to serve as a solid base upon which to layer other, modular rules; it does not include classes, monster stats, or spells. These can be referenced from original or new sources, or created yourself. Season to taste.

—David Perry, [lithyscaphe.blogspot.com](http://lithyscaphe.blogspot.com)

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# PLAY PROCEDURES

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## DUNGEON TURN

1. The Referee checks for Wandering Monsters, if applicable.
2. The party takes actions (move, search, listen, enter rooms, etc).
3. If monsters are encountered, go to Encounter procedure.
4. The Turn ends. The Referee should update the records on the passing of time, with attention to light sources, spell durations, and the need to rest.

## ENCOUNTER

1. The Referee determines how far away the monsters are, and rolls for surprise if applicable.
2. Any sides which are not surprised roll Initiative to determine who acts first.
3. The Referee determines the monsters' reaction to the party, rolling for reaction if applicable.
4. The players decide how they will act.
  - a. If the players flee and the Referee determines that the monsters pursue, see Chases.
  - b. If combat breaks out, see Combat.
  - c. Otherwise resolve the interaction.

## WILDERNESS DAY

1. Players decide their course of travel.
2. The Referee determines whether the party lose their way (see Travel).
3. The Referee checks for Wandering Monsters, if applicable.
4. The Referee describes the terrain passed through and any sites of interest that the party comes across.
5. If monsters are encountered, go to Encounter procedure.
6. The day ends. The Referee updates records of time passed, with attention to rations, spell duration, and the need to rest.

## COMBAT ROUND

1. Initiative: 1d6 is rolled by each side.
2. The winner acts first. On their Round:
  - I. The Referee may check Morale for monsters.
  - II. Movements can be made.
  - III. Missile Attack Rolls are made, accounting for DEX Modifiers, cover, range, and magic adjustments.
  - IV. Spells are cast and applicable Saving Throws are made.
  - V. Melee combat and other actions occur; attack and Damage Rolls are made, accounting for STR and magic adjustments.
3. Other side(s) act through step 2.
4. When all sides of a conflict have acted and the combat will continue into the next Round, begin again at step 1.

# CHARACTERS

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## CHARACTER CREATION

### ROLL ABILITY SCORES

Character Ability Scores are determined by rolling randomly. Roll 3d6 for the character's Charisma, Constitution, Dexterity, Intelligence, Strength, and Wisdom. Note these Scores and their Modifiers (see table in Ability Scores).

### SWAPPING SCORES AND HOPELESS CHARACTERS (OPTIONAL)

You may swap two Ability Scores. If you have Modifiers that total to less than 0, you may discard the rolls and start again.

### CHOOSE A CLASS

Select one of the classes available, bearing in mind the minimum Ability Score requirements of some classes.

### CLASS ABILITIES, ATTACK VALUES, SAVING THROWS

Record your character's 1st Level attack values and Saving Throws, as well as any special abilities possessed by your character as a result of their class. If your character has a spell book, ask your Referee which spells are recorded in it. The Referee may allow you to choose.

### ROLL HIT POINTS

Determine your character's Hit Points by rolling the Hit Die of your chosen class. Add or subtract your CON Modifier to this, with a minimum final HP of 1.

### MAX HIT POINTS (OPTIONAL)

Instead of rolling for your Hit Points, use the maximum value of the Hit Die of your class, modified by CON. This applies only to character creation, not when rolling for additional Hit Points on levelling up.

### CHOOSE ALIGNMENT (OPTIONAL)

Choose or roll and note your character's Alignment (see Alignment).

### KNOWN LANGUAGES

Determine the language your character knows; this may depend on class. High Intelligence may also grant additional languages (see Languages).

### BUY EQUIPMENT

Your character starts play with  $3d6 \times 10$  Standard Coins. You may spend as much of this money as you wish to equip your character for adventure.

### ARMOR CLASS

Now that you know what kind of armor your character has, record your character's Armor Class value according to the armor type, and applying your Dexterity Modifier.

### CHOOSE A NAME

Finally, choose or roll your character's name, and any other desired details such as appearance and personality.

# ABILITY SCORES

Ability Score	Modifier	Chance of Result
3	-3	0.46%
4-5	-2	4.17%
6-8	-1	21.29%
9-12	None	48.14%
13-15	+1	21.29%
16-17	+2	4.17%
18	+3	0.46%

## CHARISMA

Charisma (CHA) measures a character's force of personality, persuasiveness, personal magnetism, attractiveness, and ability to lead. This Ability is important for how NPCs respond to a character in an encounter. Charisma also determines how easily a character may hire retainers, and their Morale.

The CHA Modifier is applied when determining the reaction of intelligent foes when uncertain (see Reactions). It is also applied to the reaction of retainers when attempting to hire them, and to determine their starting Morale.

## CONSTITUTION

Constitution (CON) represents health and stamina. A Constitution Modifier increases a character's Hit Points.

The CON Modifier is applied when the player rolls for the character's Hit Points (i.e. at 1st Level and every time a Level is gained thereafter). A character always gains a minimum of 1 Hit Point per Hit Die, regardless of CON Modifier.

## DEXTERITY

Dexterity (DEX) measures hand-eye coordination, agility, reflexes, and balance. This Ability is important for combat-oriented classes, as it affects Armor Class, and for characters who focus on missile combat.

The DEX Modifier is applied to Attack Rolls (but not Damage Rolls) made with a ranged weapon, and modifies the character's Armor Class. It also modifies the character's Initiative Roll, if the optional rule for Individual Initiative is being used (see Initiative).

## INTELLIGENCE

Intelligence (INT) determines how well a character learns, remembers, and reasons. This Ability is especially important for arcane spell casters.

The INT Modifier affects the languages a character can use (see Languages).

## STRENGTH

Strength (STR) rates a character's brawn, muscle, and physical power. This Ability is especially important for characters who focus on melee combat.

The STR Modifier is applied to attack and Damage Rolls with melee weapons and to attempts to force open a stuck door (see Doors).

## WISDOM

Wisdom (WIS) encompasses a character's willpower, common sense, perception, and intuition. While Intelligence represents one's ability to analyse information, Wisdom represents being in tune with and aware of one's surroundings.

The WIS Modifier is applied to any Saving Throw if it is caused by any sort of magic.

## ALIGNMENT (OPTIONAL)

All beings, whether characters or monsters, adhere to one of three philosophies or spheres of behaviour, known as Alignments. These spheres are Law, Neutrality, and Chaos. A player must choose one of these paths when his character is created.

### LAWFUL

Lawful beings believe in truth and justice. To this end, they will follow laws and believe all things must adhere to order. Lawful beings also believe in sacrifice to a greater good and will choose the good of a larger group over the good of an individual.

### NEUTRAL

Neutral beings are pragmatic. They believe in a balance between the ideas of Law and Chaos and, in their actions, they tend to do what will serve themselves. They might commit good or evil acts in order to further their own ends and generally will not put others' needs ahead of their own.

### CHAOTIC

Chaotic beings are in direct opposition to Law. These beings should seldom be trusted, for they tend to act in "evil" ways and will be much more selfish than a neutral being. Chaotic characters believe in chance and that there should be no innate order to life.

## CHARACTER BEHAVIOR (OPTIONAL)

Note that although players should do their best to adhere to their chosen Alignment, the Referee will take note when behavior deviates too much and may assign a new Alignment more appropriate to actual character actions. Deviation from Alignment may also be penalised, as the Referee sees fit.

## ALIGNMENT LANGUAGES (OPTIONAL)

All intelligent beings know a secret language of gestures, signs, and code words associated with their Alignment. This secret language allows beings of the same Alignment to communicate. Characters of another Alignment will recognise when an Alignment language is being used, but will not understand. It is not possible to learn another Alignment language except by changing Alignment, in which case the former language is forgotten. Alignment languages have no written form.

## COSMIC ALIGNMENT (OPTIONAL)

For a less prescriptive behavioral setting, consider all player characters and human NPCs of Neutral Alignment, with Law and Chaos being reserved for true monsters, or those who have made pacts with great forces in return for power.

Optionally, only Clerics are considered Lawful and only Magic Users and/or Elves are considered Chaotic.

# LANGUAGES

## LANGUAGE AND INTELLIGENCE

The Intelligence of a character affects whether they can speak, read, and write the language(s) they know, according to the table below:

INT	Language Ability
3	Unable to read or write, broken speech in native language
4-5	Unable to read or write in native language
6-8	Can write simple words in native language
9-12	Can read and write native language
13-15	Can read and write known languages, knows one additional language
16-17	Can read and write known languages, knows two additional languages
18	Can read and write known language, knows three additional languages

## THE COMMON TONGUE

The common tongue (sometimes simply called Common) is a language which is widespread among intelligent species. All player character races are able to speak Common, as well as many monsters.

It is assumed that the common tongue is is a language common to all humans and used by other intelligent races. However, the Referee may rule that different humans in the campaign world have different languages, in which case a particular human language must be chosen instead of the common tongue.

## PLAYER CHARACTER LANGUAGES

All characters begin play with the common tongue (and their Alignment language if used). Some classes may grant further languages, and characters with high Intelligence receive additional languages. The Referee may create a list of languages to either choose from or roll randomly on.

## CHANCE OF KNOWN LANGUAGE (OPTIONAL)

Instead of determining the languages a character knows at creation and restricting the languages to a set list, a character's knowledge of a language can be established when they first encounter it. Everyone has a base chance of 1-in-6 to know a particular language, modified by their INT, and the following cumulative Modifiers:

Modifier	Language Type
+1	Native near your homeland
-1	Not native to your race of demi-human
-1	Not native to any demi-human
-1	Ancient, dead, or esoteric/secret

# ADVENTURING RULES

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## ABILITY CHECKS (OPTIONAL)

Sometimes, the Referee might require a test against an Ability Score, instead of a Saving Throw, to determine if a character succeeds in a task or escapes a danger. For example, DEX might be used to jump over a pit or STR might be used to push an object.

The player rolls 1d20 and, if the result is less than or equal to the Ability, the check succeeds. If the roll is greater than the Ability, the check fails.

Bonuses or penalties to the roll may be applied, with a Modifier of -4 being a relatively easy Ability Check and +4 being very difficult. Of course, any Modifier between these extremes can be applied.

An unmodified roll of 1 should be treated as a success and a 20 treated as a failure.

## ABILITY SCORE ALTERATION

Some dangers may cause damage directly to, or loss of, Ability Scores. Furthermore, Ability Scores may be directly increased by various means. These effects may be temporary, or permanent.

Changes to Ability Scores immediately cause their Modifiers to change accordingly.

A character who falls to zero in any Ability Score dies.

## CHASES

When the party encounters monsters and one side decides to flee, the other may wish to pursue them. Generally, this is possible either before combat has begun, or when one side breaks away from combat.

In either case, pursuit is only possible if the pursuing side's Movement Rate is at least as fast as the fleeing side's.

## SURPRISE

If one side is surprised, the other side may be able to flee without the possibility of being chased—the surprised side may not even be aware that the encounter occurred. In the wilderness, where greater distances are involved, this is always possible.

## GROUP MOVEMENT RATE

It is common for monsters to chase the whole party, as a group. In this case, it is important to note that a side's Movement Rate is usually determined by the speed of the slowest member.



# CHASES IN THE DUNGEON

One side can always successfully flee if its Movement Rate (see Movement) is higher than the other side's and if combat has not commenced. A pursuit is possible if the pursuing side's Movement Rate is greater than or equal to the fleeing side's.

Time in a chase is measured in Rounds (see Time), with each side assumed to be running at full speed (see Movement). Most monsters will not continue a chase if the characters manage to get out of the monster's range of vision.

If the monsters enjoy treasure, there is a 3-in-6 probability that they will stop pursuit to collect any treasure the characters drop. Hungry or less intelligent monsters may do the same if the characters drop food. Burning oil or other obstacles may also slow or stop a pursuit.

# CHASES IN THE WILDERNESS

With the open spaces and (generally) good visibility in the wilderness, a chase is assumed to play out over an extended period—time is not tracked Round by Round. The probability that one group can escape from another is determined by the relative size of the two sides. The more members in the pursuing side there are relative to the fleeing side, the greater chances the fleeing side has of escaping. This is because larger groups cannot move as fast or as quietly.

The basic chance of escape is determined by consulting the table opposite. The Referee may modify the probabilities based on the conditions and environment. For example, if one side has time to flee within a densely wooded area, the Referee may give a bonus of 25% to escape. If one side's Movement Rate is double that of the other, chance to escape may be modified by 25% in its favor. There is always a 5% chance of escape, unless surprised.

The following procedure is followed, day by day, until the chase is over.

1. Roll for escape (see table, below). If the roll succeeds, the fleeing party has escaped; the chase is over.
2. If the roll fails, the fleeing party must choose either to be caught (ending the chase) or to flee in a random direction, determined by the Referee (no mapping is possible).
3. If the fleeing party is faster, they have escaped. The chase is over.
4. If the chase continues, compare the speeds of the fleeing and pursuing sides:
  - If the fleeing side is at least as fast as the pursuing side, it has another chance to escape; return to step 1.
  - If the pursuing side is faster, there is a 50% chance of them catching up. If the roll succeeds, the fleeing side has been caught; the chase is over. If the roll fails, the fleeing party has another chance to escape; return to step 1.

	10%	25%	35%	50%	70%	90%
1-4	--	--	--	1	2-3	4+
5-12	--	--	1-3	4-8	9+	--
13-24	--	1-6	7-16	17+	--	--
25+	1-10	11-30	31+	--	--	--

Top row: Chance of escape  
Left column: Size of fleeing group  
Values: Size of pursuing group

## CLIMBING

When characters are climbing in a difficult or tense situation, the Referee may specify a chance of failure (as a percentage or an x-in-6 chance) or may require an Ability Check versus DEX (if the optional Ability Checks rule is being used).

Note that very steep or sheer surfaces are normally impossible to climb without specialised equipment. Some characters may have class abilities which allow them to attempt to climb such surfaces unaided.

## DEATH

A character or monster reduced to 0 Hit Points or less is killed. If a player's character dies, they may create a new character to enter play at the next appropriate occasion.

## PROMOTING A RETAINER TO PC

If a PC with any retainers dies, that PC's player may choose to immediately adopt one of their retainers as their new character. Roll any Ability Scores and determine any other aspects of the character not already established.

## INHERITANCE (OPTIONAL)

Players may create a will for their characters, to leave treasure behind for an heir. If this is done, the treasure must be stored with a reputable bank, which will charge a total of 10% of the treasure for their services. A player might try to leave money to an heir through less safe means, such as burying it and leaving a map behind, but this is more risky. A character's heir must be a new, 1st Level character and a player is only allowed to leave a character inheritance one time.

## DISTANCE AND MEASUREMENT

When characters are adventuring in a dungeon, all ranges and Movement Rates are measured in feet. However, the wilderness is not cramped like a dungeon and characters can usually see further ahead and need not be as wary of obstacles. For this reason, ranges and Movement Rates are measured in yards, rather than feet, in the wilderness. One yard is equal to three feet.

Note that areas (such as the area of a spell effect or a breath weapon) are always measured in feet, both in dungeons and in the wilderness.

## DOORS

Dungeons often have many doors, some secret and others obvious. Many are locked and many are stuck.

### LOCKED DOORS

Locks must be picked by a character proficient with lock picks or opened by magic.

### STUCK DOORS

There is a base 2-in-6 chance of being able to force open a stuck door. Strength adjustments apply, but cannot take the success range above 5-in-6 or below 1-in-6.

A failed attempt to force open a door eliminates any possibility of surprise (see Encounters) that the party may have against any monsters on the other side of the door.

Note that monsters resident to the dungeon are often able to pass through stuck doors unhindered.

## BREAKING DOWN DOORS

If other options fail, players may wish to open a door by brute force, hacking at it with axes and such like. This takes one Turn and is handled the same as forcing open a stuck door (see above).

Breaking down a door is a noisy business and the Referee may make a check for wandering monsters, to see if anything is attracted by the noise.

## SECRET DOORS

Secret doors can only be spotted if characters are specifically looking for them (see Searching).

## WEDGING DOORS

Doors opened by adventurers (by whatever means) are likely to swing shut after they pass. To prevent this, doors may be held open using iron spikes or other wedges.

Likewise, players may wish to wedge doors shut, to hinder monsters' movement.

## LISTENING AT DOORS

PCs have a 1-in-6 chance of detecting subtle sounds beyond a door. (Some types of adventurer may have an increased chance of success.)

The Referee should always roll for the character listening so that the player never knows if the roll failed or if there simply is no sound behind the door.

This attempt may only be made one time at any door by a character. Note that some creatures, such as undead, do not any make noise.

# ENCUMBRANCE

There are two options for Encumbrance.

## BY ARMOR & LOAD

A character's Base Movement Rate is determined by two factors: the armor they are wearing and whether they are reasonably Free, or Laden with what they are carrying (at Referee discretion).

Armor	Base MR/Combat MR	
	Free	Laden
None	150'/50'	90'/30'
Light	120'/40'	60'/20'
Medium	90'/30'	30'/10'
Heavy	60'/20'	15'/5'

## BY ITEM SLOTS

A character has a carrying capacity in Item Slots equal to their Constitution and Strength Scores added and divided by 2. Each Slot worth of stuff they carry beyond their capacity reduces their Base Movement Rate (typically 120") by 5'

The Referee determines the number of Slots an item occupies, but 1 Slot typically fits: any object up to 1' diameter, 200 coins, or a reasonable amount of small, similar objects. Medium and Heavy armor are 2 and 3 Slots respectively. Two-handed weapons take 2.

## PENALTIES FOR ENCUMBRANCE (OPTIONAL)

In addition to (or instead of) reducing Movement Rate, being Laden or carrying Slots beyond capacity imposes increasing penalties to AC, Attack Rolls, Ability Checks, and/or Saving Throws, at Referee Discretion.

# EXPERIENCE AND LEVELING UP

All characters that make it through an adventure alive receive experience points (XP). XP is gained from two sources: treasure recovered and monsters defeated. Sufficient XP allows characters to Level up, gaining any advancements and bonuses granted by the next Level of your class. Generally characters may only Level up when resting.

## DIVISION OF EXPERIENCE

The XP awards for treasures recovered and monsters defeated are totalled and divided evenly between all characters who survived the adventure. Note that total XP is divided evenly between all party members (including retainers, who receive a 50% share), irrespective of how the players decide to divide the treasure.

## RECOVERED TREASURE

Non-magical treasure acquired through hardship and recovered to a safe location grants XP at a rate of 1 XP per 1 Standard Coin value (usually gold or silver, see Money and Coins).

## DEFEATED MONSTERS

All monsters defeated by the party (slain, outsmarted, captured, scared away, etc.) grant XP based on how powerful they are. The XP value of a monster is determined by its Hit Dice plus a bonus for each special ability it has (e.g. breath attacks, spell-like abilities, etc.). A monster defeated under especially dangerous circumstances may be treated as one Hit Dice category higher on the chart.

## XP FROM DEFEATED MONSTERS

Monster HD	Base XP	Bonus XP/Ability
<1	5	1
1	10	3
1+	15	4
2	20	5
2+	25	10
3	35	15
3+	50	25
4	75	50
4+	125	75
5	175	125
5+	225	175
6	275	225
6+	350	300
7	450	400
8	650	550
9-10+	900	700
11-12+	1,100	800
13-16+	1,350	950
17-20+	2,000	1,150
21+*	2,500	2,000

\*For monsters of HD 22 and higher, add a cumulative 250 XP for the Base and Bonus categories.

## SIMPLIFIED XP FROM MONSTERS (OPTIONAL)

Instead of using the chart, the party receives 100 XP per Hit Die of defeated monsters. The base rate may be reduced if the Referee wishes to downplay combat.

## FALLING

Falling from a height onto a hard surface inflicts 1d6 damage per 10' fallen.

### CONTROLLED FALLS (OPTIONAL)

If the fall is intentional and controlled, the first 10' fallen is ignored.

## FORAGING AND HUNTING

When adventuring in a dungeon, there may be very little available to eat. Characters must take rations with them to cover the extent of time they expect to be away from town. However, they may occasionally kill an edible monster. When in the wilderness, characters can hunt or forage for food.

### FORAGING

Foraging for food is an activity that can be accomplished without hindering travel speed by gathering fruit, herbs, nuts, or small animals along the way. For each day of travel while foraging, characters have a 1-in-6 chance of acquiring sufficient food for 1d6 human-sized beings.

### HUNTING

Hunting must be engaged in as the sole activity for a day—no travelling or resting is possible. When hunting, there is a 1-in-6 chance of encountering animals which may be suitable for eating (if they can be caught!). This is in addition to the normal chance of random encounters (see Wandering Monsters).

## HEALING

For each full day of complete rest, a character or monster recovers 1d3 Hit Points. If the rest is interrupted, the character or monster will not heal that day.

Healing may also occur through magic, such as potions or spells. This kind of healing is instantaneous. Magical healing and natural healing can be combined.

## HIRELINGS

Hirelings are NPCs hired by a character to perform certain services. Hirelings differ from retainers in that they do not accompany characters on adventures.

The most common types of hireling are:

- **Mercenaries:** Hired soldiers who will guard, patrol, and otherwise serve in wilderness settings, but only as part of a larger force, not an adventuring party.
- **Specialists:** Hired individuals who have a particular trade or who have special knowledge. These individuals are usually hired for a specific task.

# LIGHT, VISION, AND VISIBILITY

## IN THE DUNGEON

Characters will usually want to bring a source of light with them on underground expeditions. Typical light sources enable normal vision within a 30' radius.

## IN THE WILDERNESS

Characters can usually see for three miles around them, in open terrain. This range may sometimes be reduced (e.g. in overgrown terrain such as a forest) or increased (e.g. looking out from the top of a mountain).

## LIGHT AND SURPRISE

Characters or monsters that carry a light in a dark environment are usually unable to surprise foes (see Encounters), because the light gives them away.

## INFRAVISION

All non-human monsters and many demi-human races have infravision. Characters who have infravision can see the heat energy that radiates off of living things. Generally, living things will be visible as bright tones, while cool items are grey and very cold objects are black. It is not possible to read in the dark with infravision, because fine detail cannot be perceived.

Infravision works within a limited range (60' for monsters) and only functions in darkness. Visible light (normal or magical) and large heat sources will disrupt it.

## DARKNESS IN COMBAT

See Visibility in the Combat section for effects of darkness on combat.

# MONEY AND COINS

The most commonly used coin is known as a Standard Coin, or just "coin". The type or metal of the Standard Coin is determined by the wealth Level of the campaign setting; gold for high-wealth settings, silver for medium, copper for low.

Note that many adventures assume gold as the assumed Standard Coin, but some use silver. The Referee should convert as desired according to the campaign setting.

Each silver piece is worth 10 copper pieces (cp). A gold piece (gp) is worth 10 sp. Less commonly used are the electrum piece (ep) which is worth 5 sp, and the platinum piece (pp), which is worth 10 gp.

Relative Value	Coin	Metal
1	pp	Platinum
10	gp	Gold
20	ep	Electrum
100	sp	Silver
1000	cp	Copper

# MOVEMENT

Each character has a base Movement Rate. The default is 120', but this may be modified by a character's class or by the amount of gear carried.

If the group wants to stay together, they may only move as quickly as the slowest character.

If the party is being pursued or pursuing someone, see Chases. If they are traveling long distances, see Travel.

## MOVEMENT IN DUNGEONS

A character can move their Movement Rate in feet in one Turn (see Time) when exploring unknown areas of a dungeon. This (very slow!) rate of movement takes account for the fact that PCs are exploring, watching their footing, mapping, and taking care to be quiet and to avoid obstacles.

When moving through dungeon areas they are familiar with, the Referee may allow characters to move at a faster rate. For example, the Referee may allow characters to move at three times their base Movement Rate, when moving through familiar areas. Thus, a character whose base Movement Rate is 120' could move 360' in a Turn.

See Play Procedures for how to structure actions during Turns while exploring a dungeon.

## MOVEMENT IN ENCOUNTERS

During encounters, a character can move up to one third of their Movement Rate per Round in feet (in the dungeon) or yards (in the wilderness). For example, a character whose base Movement Rate is 120' could move 40' per Round during a dungeon encounter. Characters may move at this rate for at most 60 Rounds (one Turn).

## RUNNING

During encounters, a character may choose to run at up to their full Movement Rate per Round in feet (in the dungeon) or yards (in the wilderness). Characters may only move at this rate for 30 Rounds before becoming exhausted: suffering a -2 penalty to attacks, damage, and Armor Class. The penalties for exhaustion last until characters have rested for three full Turns.

While running outside of an encounter, mapping is not possible, the risk of triggering unknown traps is increased, and it may attract attention, provoking a check for wandering monsters.

# MONSTERS

## WANDERING MONSTERS

Besides the monsters specifically placed in certain regions of a dungeon or wilderness, the party may randomly encounter monsters on the move between areas. These are known as “wandering monsters”. The chance of a random encounter occurring depends on the type of area being explored (e.g. dungeon region or Level, type of wilderness terrain). Each type of area should have its own table of wandering monsters, which the Referee rolls on when an encounter takes place.

## IN THE DUNGEON

The typical chance of encountering a wandering monster is 1-in-6, rolled every two Turns. The chance of wandering monsters may be higher or lower in certain parts of the dungeon and the actions of the party can also affect this. For example, making a lot of noise or light should increase the chance, while resting quietly in an out-of-the-way location should decrease the chance.

## IN THE WILDERNESS

It is usual to check for random encounters once per day, though the Referee may make more checks: up to three or four per day. The chance of encounters depends on the terrain being explored:

- City, clear, plains, settled land: 1-in-6.
- Barren, desert, forest, hills, sea: 2-in-6.
- Jungle, mountains, swamp: 3-in-6.

## STAT BLOCKS

**AC:** Armor Class. If taken from a source using Descending AC, subtract it from 19 to find its Ascending AC equivalent. THACO can be ignored.

**HD:** Hit Dice. Roll this number of d8s to determine each individual's Hit Points.

- One or more asterisks after the HD number indicate the number of special abilities the monster has, for the purpose of XP calculation.
- Modifiers to the HD (e.g. +3, -1) are applied to the Hit Point total, after rolling the appropriate number of d8s.

**AT/Att:** Attacks usable each Round and their damage. An attack bonus may be listed; this is added to each of the monster's Attack Rolls. If not, you might consider using the monster's number of HD as their attack bonus.

**Save/SV:** The monster's Saving Throw values. Often uses the values for an equivalent character class and Level.

**Move/MV:** Base Movement Rate, often followed by encounter Movement Rate.

**ML:** Morale rating.

**AL:** Default Alignment.

**XP:** Pre-calculated XP granted for defeating the monster.

**No./NA:** Number appearing. If there are two values are listed, the first usually refers to those encountered wandering dungeons or the wilderness, while the latter is used for lairs.

**TT:** Treasure type. The letter code used to determine the amount and type of treasure possessed by the monster(s).



# REACTIONS

Often, circumstances make it obvious how an NPC or creature will react when encountered. However, not every encounter entails combat.

If the Referee wishes to randomly determine the reaction of an NPC or creature upon encountering the party, roll on this table. This can be done immediately when the encountered side is made aware of the party (which may be after a combat is initiated, if surprised), or any other time a reaction may be unknown, or change.

Use the column best suited to the situation; creatures may be considered Strong or Weak depending on their Hit Die relative to the party's average Level, or other factors.

If one specific character attempts to interact with NPCs or intelligent creatures, that character's CHA Score is used to modify the reaction roll. The Referee may allow other Modifiers depending on the circumstances, such as offering food or treasure.

2d6	NPC	Stronger Creature	Weaker Creature
2-	Attack	Attack	Flee
3-5	Hostile	Attack	Flee
6-8	Neutral	Threaten	Freeze
9-11	Friendly	Ignore	Friendly
12+	Helpful	Friendly	Grovel

# RESTING

Characters require periods of rest, as follows, in order to avoid exhaustion.

## IN THE DUNGEON

Characters can explore, fight, or otherwise remain active for 5 Turns before needing to rest for 1 Turn.

## IN THE WILDERNESS

During wilderness travel, the characters have to rest 1 day per 6 days of travel.

## AFTER 20 HOURS PASS

Characters need at least 4 hours of sleep for every 24 that pass.

## AFTER A FORCED MARCH

After a forced march, the characters must rest for a full day.

## AFTER RUNNING

Characters who have been running for more than 30 Rounds must rest for 3 full Turns to recover.

## EFFECTS OF NOT RESTING

If characters press on without resting, they suffer a penalty of -1 to hit and Damage Rolls until they have rested for the required length of time. After running, this penalty is increased to -2 and additionally applied to Armor Class.

# RETAINERS

Retainers are NPCs that are hired by characters for extra hands during an adventure. Retainers are not mindless slaves and, although they will usually share the party's risks, they will not willingly act as battle fodder. If abused in any way, retainers will typically warn others of this and the PCs will soon find it difficult to hire other retainers.

## HIRING RETAINERS

Retainers are recruited through negotiation, with the Referee playing the roles of the NPCs a character attempts to hire. The PC should explain what the job entails and the rates of pay: for example, a percentage of any treasure recovered or a flat rate of pay. The party may also be required to pay for the retainer's daily upkeep (food and lodgings) and/or any new adventuring gear, weapons, or mounts for the retainer's use.

## RETAINER REACTIONS

After an offer is made, the Referee rolls 2d6 on the table below to decide the potential retainer's reaction. The roll is modified by the hiring character's CHA and the Referee may apply a -3 to +3 modifier depending on the specifics.

2d6	Hiring Offer Result
2	Offer refused & rumors spread, -1 to hire anyone in this area
3-5	Offer refused today, -1 to attempts for this character
6-8	They want more, improve the offer and reroll with a + modifier
9-11	Offer accepted
12	Offer accepted enthusiastically, +1 Morale

## RETAINER CLASS AND LEVEL

Retainers can be of any class (or Level 0 normal humans), but must be of equal or lower Level to the PC who has hired them.

## EXPERIENCE

Although retainers are "played" by the Referee, they acquire experience in the same way PCs do, can advance in Level, and are affected by all of the same class rules. Because retainers follow instructions when on an adventure, thus not directly engaging in problem solving, they suffer a penalty of -50% to XP.

## RETAINER MORALE

Retainers' Morale is effectively a rating of how loyal they are to their leader. Retainers have a base Morale rating of 7, modified by the hiring character's CHA. This rating may be adjusted at the Referee's discretion: it may be increased if the PC has been particularly good to the retainer (e.g. repeatedly given additional treasure) or reduced if the PC has been cruel or contrary to their word.

Retainers signed up to work as adventurers, so are not frightened off at the first sign of danger. Morale rolls (see Combat) for retainers are made:

- Each time the retainer is exposed to a particularly perilous situation. If the roll fails, the retainer will likely flee.
- At the end of an adventure. If the roll fails, the NPC will not work for the PC again.

# SAVING THROWS

All characters and monsters can make Saving Throws to avoid the full effects of spells, attacks, or other threats. Characters and monsters have a rating for each Saving Throw category:

- **Paralysis** (or restraint, petrification)
- **Poison** (or any situation in which HP is not sufficient to prevent losing consciousness or death)
- **Breath** (of a dragon or other things that affect a wide area)
- **Device** (magic devices such as wands, staves, rings, or magical traps)
- **Magic** (spells or innate magical abilities)

The appropriate Saving Throw to make and the effects of a success or failure will be indicated in the description of the spell, monster attack, or adventure scenario. Note that certain magical effects may trigger a Save for a category other than Magic, such as *Hold Person* inflicting a Save vs paralysis.

If the Save to use is uncertain, proceed down the list above in the order given, and select the first one that seems like it might be applicable.

Unless otherwise stated, Monsters Save as a Fighter of the same Level as its number of Hit Dice.

## BASIC SAVING THROW VALUES

Saving Throw Category	Normal Human	1st Level Fighter or 1 HD Monster
Paralysis	16	14
Poison	14	12
Breath	17	15
Device	15	13
Magic	18	16

## ROLLING A SAVING THROW

When affected by a spell or attack form which requires a Saving Throw, the player or Referee must roll 1d20. A result that is greater than or equal to the value listed for the Saving Throw is a success. A result of less than the listed value is a failure.

## SUCCESSFUL SAVES

A successful Saving Throw against an effect that causes damage means that the damage is halved. A successful Saving Throw against an effect that does not cause damage means the effect has been entirely avoided or negated.

## ITEM SAVING THROWS

If a character is killed by a destructive spell or special attack (e.g. a lightning bolt spell or dragon's breath), their equipment is assumed to be destroyed. Magic items may be allowed a Saving Throw, using the character's Saving Throw values. Items which grant a bonus in combat (e.g. magical weapons and armor) may also apply this bonus to the Saving Throw.

## SEARCHING

Dungeons often include hidden features and mechanisms such as secret doors and traps. Adventurers can spot these by searching. The player must declare the particular object or 10' × 10' area to be searched. Searching takes one Turn.

If a character is searching in the right location, there is a base 1-in-6 chance of finding a secret door or trap. (Some types of adventurer may have an increased chance.) The Referee should always roll for the character searching, so that the player never knows if the roll failed or if there simply are no hidden features in the area searched.

Each character can only make one attempt to search any given object or 10' × 10' area.

### REPEATED SEARCHING (OPTIONAL)

The Referee may allow multiple searches of the same object or area. The cost of repeated searches is time (one Turn per search). As the passing of time brings other complications (wandering monsters, light sources burning out, etc.) the players must weigh the risks.

## STARVATION

If characters go for a full day or more without food or water, the Referee may begin to apply penalties to Attack Rolls and Movement Rate, require more frequent rests, or even begin to deduct Hit Points in extreme cases.

## SWIMMING

Characters move at half their normal Movement Rate when swimming. It is assumed that every character knows how to swim, unless there is some obvious reason a character could not have learned.

### DROWNING

Characters that are encumbered or in treacherous water conditions have a probability of drowning, at the Referee's discretion. Heavily encumbered characters (wearing plate mail armor and/or carrying a large amount of treasure) will likely have above 90% chance of drowning. Characters carrying less treasure or wearing lighter armor may have as little as 10% chance of drowning.

## TIME

Aside from normal time increments (minutes, hours, days, and so on), the following special units are used in the game. In all matters of time and movement, the Referee is the final authority on what may be accomplished in a given period of time.

### TURNS

When in the dungeon, characters take actions in time increments called Turns. One Turn is equal to 10 minutes. Character actions that take one Turn include looking for secret doors or traps in a 10' × 10' area (see Searching) or moving up to the party's full Movement Rate (see Movement).

### ROUNDS

Rounds are ten seconds of game time each, so there are 60 Rounds in a Turn. Time is only measured in Rounds during encounters, especially in combat (see Encounters and Combat).

# TRAPS

## TRIGGERING

Each trap is triggered by a specific action (e.g. opening a door or walking over a particular area). Every time a character makes an action that could trigger a trap, there is a 2-in-6 chance of the trap being sprung. Some traps may be more or less likely to trigger, if the Referee wishes.

## SEARCHING FOR TRAPS

Adventurers may choose to search objects or areas for traps (see Searching).

# TRAVEL

See Play Procedures for how to structure actions during a day of traveling in wilderness.

When travelling in the wilderness, the distance a character can travel in a normal day's march is determined by dividing their base Movement Rate by five. This is the number of miles travelled in a day. For example, a character whose base Movement Rate is 120' could travel up to 24 miles in a day.

Some types of terrain modify the speed at which characters can travel:

- Desert, forest, hills, rocky: 33% slower.
- Jungle, mountains, swamp: 50% slower.
- Maintained roads: 50% faster.

## FORCED MARCH

If they need to travel further in one day, characters may engage in a forced march. A forced march is a day of hard, tiring, overland travel, but increases travel speed by 50%. For example, a character who can normally travel 24 miles in a day can travel 36 miles on a forced march. After a forced march, the characters must rest for a full day.

## LOSING DIRECTION

Characters can confidently follow trails, roads, and other well-known landmarks without fear of becoming lost. However, when travelling through untracked wilderness, it is easy to lose direction. At the start of each day of travel, the Referee will roll to determine if the group loses direction. The probability depends on the terrain being traversed:

- Clear, grasslands: 1-in-6.
- Hills, mountains, woods, rocky: 2-in-6.
- Desert, jungle, swamp: 3-in-6.

## EFFECTS OF BEING LOST

If the roll indicates that the party is lost, the Referee will decide which direction they are actually travelling in. One option is to pick a direction only slightly off course. For example, if the group intended to go south, they are actually headed southwest or west.

It may take some time for a lost party to realise that it is moving in the wrong direction.

# ENCOUNTERS AND COMBAT

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## ENCOUNTERS

An encounter begins when the characters stumble onto a monster, either because the Referee has planned an encounter in the area the PCs are exploring or because a random die roll indicates an encounter (see Wandering Monsters).

See Play Procedures for initiating an Encounter.

### TIME IN ENCOUNTERS

When an encounter begins, action is measured in Rounds (see Time). It is usual to roll for surprise (see below) and Initiative (see Initiative) to determine which side acts first.

### ENCOUNTER DISTANCE

Unless the initial distance to encountered monster(s) is obvious:

- In dungeons, monster(s) encountered are  $2d6 \times 10$  feet away, moving in the direction of the party. Note that this may place them around corners or beyond doors. This may influence surprise.
- In the wilderness, the monster is  $4d6 \times 10$  yards away. If either side is surprised, this is  $1d4 \times 10$  yards.

### SURPRISE

Checks for surprise are made whenever an encounter is unexpected by at least one side. For instance, if the player characters are making a lot of noise, a monster may not have a chance to be surprised, but the characters might be, if the monster was waiting quietly.

Each side that is not already aware of the other's presence rolls 1d6. The Referee rolls for monsters and one player rolls for the adventuring party as a whole. A result of 1 or 2 means the side is surprised and cannot act for one Round. If both sides are surprised, there is simply a momentary confusion—neither side has any advantage. If one side is surprised but the other is not, then the side that is not surprised gains a one Round advantage.

### INDIVIDUAL SURPRISE (OPTIONAL)

Instead of making a single surprise roll for the whole party, each individual player may roll for their character. In this way, some characters may be surprised in the first Round of the encounter, while others may be able to act as normal.

### REACTIONS

If desired, roll for the encountered NPC or creature's reaction (see Reactions).

### EVASION

The characters may decide they are outmatched and flee an encounter or a monster might flee. Characters may choose whether they chase a fleeing monster. The Referee will decide if monsters chase fleeing characters. A low roll on the Monster Reactions table may be taken to indicate that the monster will pursue (see Chases).

### ENCOUNTER DURATION

An encounter is assumed to take at least one full Turn to complete, including time to rest, regroup, clean weapons, bind wounds, and so on, afterwards.

# COMBAT PROCEDURE

## SEQUENCE OF A COMBAT ROUND

1. Initiative: 1d6 is rolled by each side.
2. The winner acts first. On their Round:
  - I. Referee may check foe's Morale.
  - II. Movements can be made.
- III. Missile Attack Rolls are made, accounting for DEX Modifiers, cover, range, and magic effects.
- IV. Spells are cast and applicable Saving Throws are made.
- V. Melee combat and other actions occur; attack and Damage Rolls are made, accounting for STR and magic effects.
3. Other side(s) act through step 2.
4. When all sides of a conflict have acted and the combat will continue into the next Round, the sequence begins again at step 1.

## SIDES

In combat, characters are grouped into "sides", typically the player characters on one side and the group of monsters which opposes them on another. In more complex situations, it is possible to have multiple sides involved in a conflict.

## UNORDERED ACTIONS (OPTIONAL)

For those who prefer a less rigid sequence of combat, each side's actions (the steps listed above as 3a to 3e) may be resolved in any order.

## DECLARED RETREATS AND SPELLCASTING (OPTIONAL)

Characters who wish to cast a spell or retreat/disengage from melee must declare so before Initiative is rolled for that Round.

# INITIATIVE

At the start of each Round, each side rolls 1d6 to determine Initiative. The side with the highest result on 1d6 acts on the first Round. If tied, each side in the tie acts at the same time. All actions are completed, unaffected by opposed actions. This can result in double-kills.

## INDIVIDUAL INITIATIVE (OPTIONAL)

Instead of an Initiative Roll per side, a roll may be made for each individual PC or monster involved in a battle, modified by DEX. The Referee may determine an Initiative bonus or penalty for monsters which are very fast or slow, instead of applying a DEX Modifier.

## SPLIT SIDE INITIATIVE (OPTIONAL)

As Individual Initiative, but foes get a single roll, or per group of similar foes.

## STATIC INITIATIVE (OPTIONAL)

Instead of rolling each Round, the result of the first Initiative roll is maintained through the entire combat.

## HOLDING ACTION (OPTIONAL)

Sometimes winning the Initiative over a foe is not all that advantageous because it is important to know what the foe is going to do before deciding for oneself. Any type of action can be held until the end of the Round. At the time the action is taken, it happens simultaneously, not before, other actions are taken. For instance, if waiting for an enemy to close later in the Round before attacking, when that enemy closes both attacks happen simultaneously.

## MORALE

Players may always decide whether they will fight, surrender, or run away in an encounter. The Referee decides whether monsters or NPCs surrender or run away.

Monsters have a listing for Morale, rated from 2 to 12, which represents how likely they are to fight or flee when in an encounter. A score of 2 means the monster never fights (unless absolutely cornered) and a score of 12 means the monster will fight until killed, with no Morale check necessary in either case.

### MORALE CHECKS

The Referee rolls 2d6 and, if the roll is higher than the Morale of the monster, the check is a failure and the monster will either surrender or attempt a full retreat or a fighting retreat. If the result is equal to or lower than the Morale rating, a monster will continue to fight.

### WHEN TO CHECK MORALE

The Referee usually makes a Morale check under two conditions:

1. When one side of an encounter first loses a member due to death.
2. When half the group on one side is killed or otherwise incapacitated.

If a monster makes two successful Morale checks, it will fight until killed.

### ADJUSTMENTS TO MORALE

The Referee may decide to apply bonuses or penalties to Morale, with a range of -2 to +2, depending on the circumstances. For example, if one side of an encounter is losing or winning, they might receive a penalty or bonus to Morale of -1 or +1, respectively. Adjustments are never applied to monsters with a Morale of 2 or 12.

## ACTIONS IN COMBAT

Characters can generally move and perform one action in a Round. The most common action is attacking, but many other actions are possible and must be adjudicated by the Referee. The Referee has the final say on what can or cannot be done in one Round.

## MOVING

### MOVE AND ACT

A character can move up to one third of their normal Movement Rate every Round and can also attack (if an enemy is within that distance) or perform another action (except spell casting) during a Round.

### RUNNING

A character who performs no other action in a Round may run, moving up to their full Movement Rate.

### RETREATING FROM MELEE

When in melee with a foe, free movement is not so simple. Breaking away from melee is possible in two ways, as follows.

A fighting retreat, or disengaging, allows a character to move backwards at up to half their encounter Movement Rate (i.e. one sixth of their base Movement Rate). However, there must be a clear path.

A full retreat occurs when a character moves backwards at a rate faster than half of their encounter Movement Rate. The character making the movement forfeits attacking this Round and their opponent may make an immediate free Attack Roll with a +2 bonus, ignoring any shield AC bonus. (Monsters with multiple attacks per Round may only make a single Attack Roll, in this circumstance.) This is in addition to the opponent's action on its Initiative.



## ATTACKING

Player characters can normally only attack once per Round, but some monsters have multiple attacks.

### RANGE FOR MELEE AND MISSILE ATTACKS

Melee attacks are possible when foes are 5' or less from each other. Missile attacks are possible when foes are more than 5' from one another (see Ranged Attacks).

### ATTACK ROLLS (AKA TO HIT)

The player or Referee rolls 1d20, modified by STR for melee attacks or DEX for missile attacks. Any additional Attack Bonuses or Penalties are applied. A result that is equal to or above the foe's Armor Class results in a hit. For reference, an unarmored humanoid usually has an AC of 10.

### NATURAL 1S AND 20S

An Attack Roll of 20 always hits, unless the target cannot be harmed by the attack. An Attack Roll of 1 is always a miss.

### DAMAGE ROLLS

Upon a successful attack, damage is inflicted, taking into account any bonuses or penalties. Player character attacks inflict 1d6 damage; monster attacks deal the damage in the monster's description.

An attack which hits always deals at least one point of damage, even when damage Modifiers reduce the number rolled to 0.

### VARIABLE WEAPON DAMAGE (OPTIONAL)

Rather than rolling a flat 1d6 for all PC attacks, weapons may indicate a different die size to roll for damage.

## NONLETHAL DAMAGE

Any characters that wish to subdue a foe must announce that they are attacking without intent to kill. All hand weapons with a blade may be employed to deal blunt blows with the flat of the blade.

Damage is calculated normally, noting how much damage is nonlethal, "subdual" damage. A character or monster that reaches 0 HP due to subdual damage is knocked unconscious.

### UNARMED ATTACKS

Unarmed combat is the same as melee combat, but all damage is 1d2+STR.

### ATTACKING FROM BEHIND

Attacks made on a character from behind ignore the benefit of a shield or any other active defenses. It is not necessary to track individual facing, but an attack from behind can be assumed when attacking a foe that is already in melee.

# ATTACKING AT RANGE

## MISSILE WEAPON RANGES

All missile weapons have ranges, which must be taken into account when trying to strike a foe at a distance:

- If a foe is within short range, the attacker gets a +1 to hit.
- There are no bonuses or penalties for striking a foe at medium range.
- There is a penalty of -1 to strike a foe at long range.
- If a foe is further than the weapon's long range, it cannot reach them.

## COVER

Cover is an important factor that can influence missile attacks. An attacker cannot hit a foe that is entirely behind a barrier. If the target is only partly behind cover, the Referee may apply attack penalties of between -1 and -4.

For example, if a character were attempting to strike a foe through a small window, the Referee might call for a penalty of -4. If the foe were only partly covered, such as by small furniture, the penalty might be -1.

## FIRING INTO MELEE (OPTIONAL)

When firing into a group of combatants engaged in melee from more than 20' away, randomly determine who in the melee is actually targeted, before rolling to hit. Large monsters have double the chance to be hit. Very large creatures can be targeted normally.

If the firing character takes a full Round to aim, double the chance that the intended target is selected.

# CASTING A SPELL

## REQUIREMENTS

1. The caster must be able to speak and to move their hands, in order to bring a magic effect into being. As a result, a spell caster cannot cast spells if gagged, bound, or in an area of magical silence.
2. Spell casters may take no other actions (including movement!) during the same Round they intend to cast a spell.
3. Unless otherwise noted in a spell's description, a spell caster must have the intended target (a specific monster, character, or area of effect) within visual range.
4. If a spell caster has taken any damage earlier in a Round, the character is unable to cast a spell that Round. They may still perform another action.

## DISRUPTING SPELLS

If a spell caster loses initiative and is successfully attacked or fails a saving throw before his or her turn, the spell being cast is disrupted and fails. The spell is not lost from memory, however.

# OTHER ACTIONS

## DEFENDING (OPTIONAL)

Characters can decide to defend themselves in combat at the expense of all other possible activity. No other action is allowed during a Round in which a character defends, although the player is free to decide that their character is defending at any point during the Round, even out of Initiative sequence, provided that the character has not yet acted. This gives a +2 AC bonus for the Round.

## CHANGING WEAPONS (OPTIONAL)

If a character is not holding the weapon that they wants to use, they can drop the held item(s) and draw a weapon (assuming the weapon is in an accessible place such as on a belt scabbard). The character may attack with the new weapon, but there is a -2 penalty to hit during the Round.

## RETRIEVING STOWED ITEMS (OPTIONAL)

If the item is in a pouch, the item will take 1d3+1 Rounds to ready (including the first Round). If the item is in a sack or backpack, it will take 2d6+1 Rounds. During this time, the character can be attacked with a +2 attack bonus and any AC bonuses due to DEX or shields do not apply. If the character uses their normal AC in defense, the Round doesn't count toward retrieval.

## GRAPPLING (OPTIONAL)

As an action, a character may attempt to grapple another character to either immobilize or take something out of that character's hands. The attacker must have at least one hand free.

The defender, if they are armed and have not yet acted during the Round, and are not otherwise occupied, can immediately make an attack; if they hit, it prevents the grappling attempt.

## GRAPPLING ROLLS

Grappling is resolved with a contested Attack Roll. Both parties make a normal melee Attack Roll and the highest roll wins. Ties are decided by Dexterity Modifier or a die roll if both are still tied.

The winner may decide whether to immobilize, disarm, or release the loser.

If there are multiple foes attempting to grapple a single defender, all attackers make their Attack Rolls as normal, but only the best roll is used with a +1 bonus for each additional attacker. Creatures whose physiology or special abilities suggest that they have an advantage when grappling gain a further +1 bonus to their grappling roll per Hit Die.

## IMMOBILIZING

An immobilized foe can usually take no action other than attempting to escape on their next action, but can instead attack a grappling foe with natural or very small weapons (less than 1' long). Resolve this with another grappling roll. Any character immobilized for three successive grappling contests is considered pinned and helpless—no further attempts to escape can be made.

## DISARMING

If disarmament is attempted (and this includes snatching any held object, not just taking away weapons), the defender must make a Save versus Paralyzation to keep hold of the object that their attacker is attempting to take.

# SPECIAL COMBAT SITUATIONS

## HELPLESS OPPONENTS

Helpless opponents, such as those sleeping, bound, magically frozen, etc., are automatically hit by any melee attacks in combat. Only a roll for damage is required.

## MAGICAL MONSTERS

Some monsters may only be damaged by magical or silver weapons. The Referee may allow such monsters to also be harmed by attacks from a similar monster, or a monster with 5 HD or greater.

## MULTIPLE ATTACKERS

The Referee should use discretion in determining how many attackers can strike at one foe. Usually only two characters may fight side-by-side in a 10' wide hallway, unless all of the attackers are small.

## OVERWHELMING (OPTIONAL)

For each melee attacker surrounding a combatant beyond the first, they receive a -1 penalty to AC.

## VISIBILITY

Any characters who cannot see due to pitch darkness or blindness suffer -4 to hit when attacking. This penalty also applies when attacking invisible foes.

With partial visibility (smoke, fog, dim light), the Referee may reduce the attack penalty to -2.

## WATER

Characters fighting in or beneath water should have a penalty applied to their Attack Rolls. Damage from successful hits should also be reduced. Most missile weapons do not work underwater.

# MAGIC

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## SPELLS

Some character classes have the ability to memorize and cast magical spells. There are two types of magic: divine magic, which a deity or higher power grants, and arcane magic, which is learned by esoteric study.

## MEMORIZING SPELLS

A spell consists of a pattern of magical energy stored in a character's mind. A spell caster is able to memorize a certain number of spells of different spell Levels, depending on their experience Level. A character can memorize the same spell more than once if they are capable of memorizing more than one spell of the given Level.

Arcane spell casters memorize spells from spell books and are thus limited to choosing from the spells in their spell book, which must be to hand.

Divine spell casters do not study from books, but instead receive the knowledge of how to cast spells through prayer to their gods. When praying for spells, divine spell casters have access to all spells in their class' spell list that they are of high enough Level to cast.

## REST AND TIME REQUIREMENTS

All spell casters can memorize new spells after a night's sleep. It takes one hour to memorize all spells the character is capable of learning.

## CASTING SPELLS

A memorized spell may be cast by precisely replicating the required set of hand gestures and mystical spoken words. When a spell is cast, knowledge of the spell is erased from the mind of the caster.

## SPELL CASTING CONSTRAINTS

All spell casters need to be able to move their hands and speak in order to make the gestures and speak the magical phrases that bring magic effects into being. As a result, a spell caster cannot cast spells if gagged, bound, or in an area of magical silence.

It is possible for spell casting to be disrupted. However the spell is not lost from memory when this happens.

## REVERSIBLE SPELLS

Some spells are reversible; this is indicated in each spell's description.

For arcane spell casters, the normal or reversed form of a spell must be selected when the spell is memorized. An arcane spell caster may memorize both forms of a spell, if they are able to memorize more than one spell of the given Level.

A divine spell caster can use either form of a spell without having to pray for the different versions separately; the character may decide which version (normal or reversed) to use when the spell is cast. However, a divine spell caster may draw dissatisfaction from their deity when casting spells (or their reversed versions) whose effects go against the deity's Alignment.

## CUMULATIVE SPELL EFFECTS

Multiple spells cannot be used to increase the same ability (e.g. bonuses to Attack Rolls, Armor Class, Damage Rolls, Saving Throws, etc.). Spells that affect different abilities can be combined. In addition, spells can be combined with the effects of magical items.

## SPELL BOOKS

Arcane spell casters record the spells that they know in a spell book (or set of spell books). A character's spell book contains exactly the number of spells that the character is capable of memorizing. For example, a character who is able to memorize two 1st Level spells and one 2nd Level spell would have exactly that number of spells in their spell book.

### BEGINNING SPELLS

Arcane spell casters begin play with one 1st Level spell in their spell book. The Referee may choose this spell or may allow the player to select one.

### ADDING SPELLS

When an arcane spell caster gains a Level, they may consult a wizard's guild or mentor to learn new spells. In this way, the character can add spells to their spell books, so that the books contain the same number of spells the characters is able to cast. This process takes about a week of game time. (The spells a character learns in this way are determined by the Referee, who may decide to let the player to choose.)

It is also possible to add spells to a spell book by means of Magical Research.

## COPYING SPELLS (OPTIONAL)

The Referee may also allow spells to be added to a caster's spell book by copying from magic scrolls or spell books discovered in treasure hoards. Scroll spells of any Level may be copied to a spell book, but the spell disappears from the scroll. Characters may also copy spells from one spell book to another and this process does not erase spells from a book.

## LOST SPELL BOOKS

Sometimes a spell book will either be lost or destroyed. An arcane spell caster can rewrite the spells through research and memory at a cost of 1 week of game time and 1,000 sp for each spell Level. For instance, if two first Level spells and one 2nd Level spell are replaced, it will take 4 weeks and 4,000 sp. This activity requires complete concentration and a character doing this work may not engage in any other activity for the time required.

## CAPTURED SPELL BOOKS

Each arcane spell caster's spell books are written in such a way that only the owner is able to read the spells without the use of *read magic*.

# MAGIC ITEMS

## IDENTIFYING

Most magic items are not labelled, so characters must discover their exact properties through trial and error. Powerful wizards may be able to identify magic items, but it can take many weeks to do so. Alchemists are also able to identify some items, such as potions.

## USING

In order to use a magic item, a character must follow the procedures indicated in the item's description. The item must be worn or held in the usual manner. Some magic items (e.g. an enchanted suit of armor) are always active, but others must be consciously activated—this requires a Round of concentration, during which the character may do nothing else. Some items have special activation conditions, such as command words.

## CHARGES

Some magic items have limited uses, called “charges”. Each charge can be spent to bring about one instance of the item's magical effect. A character cannot know how many charges an item has and, when the charges are all spent, the item becomes a normal, non-magical object—it cannot be recharged.

## CURSED ITEMS

Cursed items, once possessed by a character, can only be disposed of if the curse is dispelled by magic. The owner of a cursed item will not believe the item is cursed and will resist efforts to get rid of the item until the curse is dispelled.

## MAGIC WEAPONS AND ARMOR

Magic weapons follow the same class restrictions as normal weapons. A magic weapon has a “+” value, indicating the degree of its enchantment. This value is applied to both Attack and Damage Rolls using the weapon. For magic armor, the wearer's AC is increased by the “+” value. Magic armor is also lighter and less cumbersome than normal.

## CURSED WEAPONS AND ARMOR

Cursed weapons have the opposite effect, incurring penalties to attack and damage equal to the “+” value specified. The possessor of a cursed weapon will prefer to use this weapon in combat above any other weapon. Cursed armor appears to be armor +1, but actually has an Armor Class rating of 11.

## POTIONS

Most potions are found as a single dose that imbues the potion's effects on one individual. Potions usually bear no label and vary in their appearance, aroma, etc. Even two potions of the same type will differ. A potion may be identified by sampling a small amount.

Unless a potion's description specifies otherwise, potions take effect in the same Round as their consumption and last for 1d6+6 Turns.

## MIXING POTIONS

If a potion is consumed while the character is still under the effects of another potion, the effects of both potions are nullified.

## SCROLLS

Scrolls are pieces of parchment, imbued with potent magical writings. Simply pronouncing the words releases their power.

Some scrolls can be deciphered and read by any class, while others have restrictions. Scrolls that contain arcane spells can only be read by an arcane spell caster employing the spell read magic. Scrolls with divine spells can be read without special deciphering, but are usable only by divine spell casters.

Once a scroll is used, the magical writing disappears. (In the case of scrolls containing multiple spells, only the spell cast disappears.)

## RINGS

Magical rings are usable by any character class. They must be worn on a finger or thumb. It is only possible to wear two magical rings: one on each hand. If more than two are worn, none of them will function.

## CURSED RINGS

Cursed rings are always active. Their effects are not nullified, no matter how many other rings are worn.

## RODS, STAVES, AND WANDS

Rods are generally usable by characters of any class. Wands are only usable by arcane spell casters. Staves are only usable by spell casters—either divine or arcane, depending on the item.

These magic items generally have a limited number of “charges” which are spent to trigger the item’s magical effect. When found, a rod has 1d10 charges, a wand has 2d10 charges, and a staff has 3d10 charges.



# APPENDIX: DIFFERENCES FROM B/X

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## CHANGES FROM B/X ESSENTIALS

- Armor Class converted to Ascending, no attack matrices needed
- Made references to XP from treasure agnostic to type of coin
- Unified Ability Score “Adjustments” into -3 to +3 Modifiers
- Saving Throws slightly renamed & redefined, & ordered by specificity
- Retainers start at 7 Morale, modified by hiring character’s CHA
- Declaration of intent of a combat round made optional
- Spells are not lost when disrupted
- Alignment & Alignment Languages made optional
- Added section on reading old school monster stat blocks & converting AC
- Tweaked values for Encumbrance by Armor & Treasure
- US English spelling, singular “they”, capitalized common terms
- Changed location and ordering of some sections
- Small revisions for formatting
- Other changes I have lost track of

## REMOVALS FROM B/X ESSENTIALS

- Prime Requisite Bonus XP
- Maximum number of Retainers
- Initiative penalty for 2H weapons
- Optional status of Morale
- Rules for Air and Water travel
- Rules for Magical Research
- Rules for Encumbrance by weight of all items, because seriously
- Certain other optional rules

## ADDITIONAL OPTIONAL RULES

### FROM LABYRINTH LORD

- Copying spells

## ADDITIONAL OPTIONAL RULES

### FROM LAMENTATIONS OF THE FLAME PRINCESS

(with some customization)

- Swapping stats on creation
- Holding action
- Parrying (renamed defending)
- Changing weapons and retrieving items in combat
- Firing missile weapons into melee
- Wrestling (renamed grappling)
- Chance of knowing languages
- Cosmic Alignment
- Ability Score alteration & death by reaching 0

## ADDITIONAL OPTIONAL RULES

### FROM GAVIN NORMAN

- Repeated searching
- Breaking down doors
- Individual Surprise
- Unordered combat actions

## COMMON HOUSE RULES AND

### ADDITIONS BY DAVID PERRY

- Two new options for Encumbrance
- Option for Encumbrance penalties
- Promotion of a retainer to PC
- Reactions for stronger/weaker foes
- Options for Split & Static Initiative
- Option for simplified XP for defeated monsters
- Option for max HP at 1st Level
- Option for critical hits & fumbles
- Option for overwhelming

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